



*Minesweeper under construction—Toronto Shipbuilding Yard
October 25 1942, chalk by Fl. Lieut. Charles Goldhamer.*

Canadian War Museum Reference 19850217-006.
http://www.cnrs-scrn.org/northern_mariner/vol16/tnm_16_4_29-48.pdf

Future Ships

First Nations developed the canoe for river travel and freight. The express canoe was their Grand Prix racer—a slick, quick communications device that was of great benefit to Canada's leaders in 1812. Canadian-built ships made the difference again in WWII. After the fall of France in 1940 Britain needed its destroyed merchant shipping, torpedoed ships and escort vessels replaced—FAST—or the lifeline of their supplies would be cut. Canada was tasked with building 26 ten-thousand-tonne cargo ships, naval escort ships, mine sweepers and as many merchant ships it could manage. It was a tall order for a country with three shipyards employing fewer than 4,000 men. But, the call was heard. Canada built 90 plants which more than 126,000 men and women soon staffed. These men and women built over 4,000 naval vessels, 300 anti-submarine warships, four tribal class destroyers and 410 cargo ships—all in record time. Since 1812, through to WWII Canada's shipbuilding proved its worth. To meet the defence demands of a rapidly changing world of instant communication and instant threat Canada will invest \$35 billion over 30 years to build 28 large vessels and 100 smaller ships for its navy and coast guard. In 2011 Vice-Admiral Paul Maddison, Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy said, "... the next class of warships we build in Canada are likely to still be in service in 2050. In fact,

building a navy is a series of 50-year decisions, any one of which is among the most substantial a government will ever make, not only for the size of the investment involved, but also because it will determine for decades to come the options future Prime Ministers will have at their disposal to respond to events.” In 1812 General Brock had the option of the express canoe manned with 12 stalwart patriots—the fastest vehicle and communication available for the time period. Let us hope that Canada stays that well defended.